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# SHEKEL

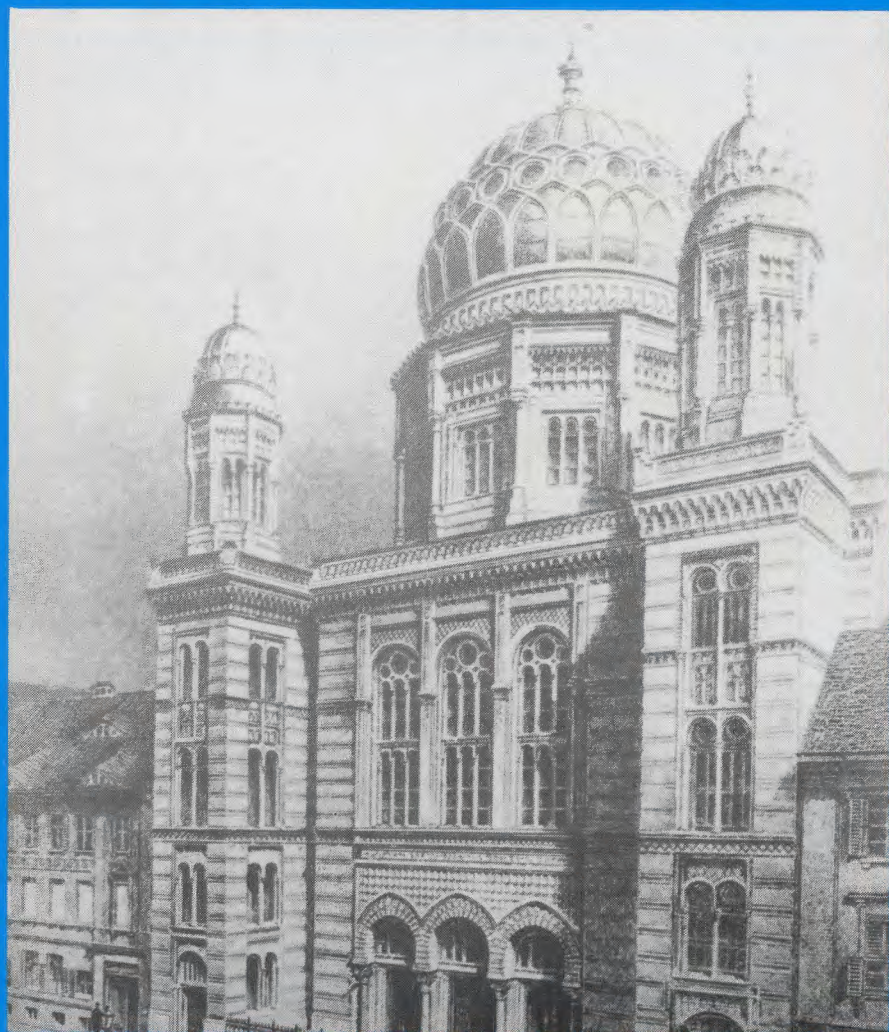


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*The Oranienburger Strasse Synagogue 1866*

# OUR ORGANIZATION

AMERICAN ISRAEL NUMISMATIC ASSOCIATION

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The American Israel Numismatic Association is a cultural and educational organization dedicated to the study and collection of Israel's coinage, past and present, and all aspects of Judaic numismatics. It is a democratically organized, membership oriented group, chartered as a non-profit association under the laws of The State of New York. The primary purpose is the development of programs, publications, meetings and other activities which will bring news, history, social and related background to the study and collection of Judaic numismatics, and the advancement of the hobby.

The Association sponsors major cultural/social/numismatic events as national and regional conventions, study tours to Israel, publications of books, and other activities which will be of benefit to the members. Local chapters exist in many areas. Write for further information.

The Association is the publisher of the SHEKEL, a six times a year journal and news magazine prepared for the enlightenment and education of the membership. It neither solicits nor accepts advertising, either paid or unpaid. All articles published are the views and opinions of their authors and may or may not reflect the views and opinions of A.I.N.A.

Membership fees: Annual \$15.-, Life \$200.-, Foreign \$20.- Junior \$5.-. Club membership \$15- Send all remittances, undelivered magazines, change of address and zip code with old address label to A.I.N.A., 5150 W. Copans Road, Margate, Fla. 33063



Editor

**EDWARD SCHUMAN**

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Photography by **HENRY KRAMARZ**



## *The President's Message by Moe Weinschel*



1992 is A.I.N.A.'s Twenty Fifth Anniversary. We have seen many interesting events and developments in Numismatics and can be proud of our status in the hobby.

The last issue of the SHEKEL was truly outstanding. We have received many compliments on the full color cover depicting the gorgeous ceramic Hanukkia. We owe a big "thank you" to our printer Dick Nettina and his Little River Press in Miami, who surprised us with this great Hanukka present.

In this issue is the story of the A.I.N.A. 25th Anniversary membership medal. The symbolism and numerology (gematria) make it a story unto itself. Artist/Designer Nathan Sobel has given us an exceptional medal we can all cherish. This medal will be sent, at no charge, to all paid up members for the current year.

New medal issues of the IGCNC are also to be noted. The Peace Conference, Tel-Aviv/New York medal, and the medal for the 500th year of the Expulsion of Jews from Spain are creating wide interest in several areas outside of numismatics.

Our plans for the 25th Anniversary Tour to Israel are moving forward at a good pace, and we anticipate one of the best ever led by A.I.N.A. This will not be a strenuous tour where you fall into bed exhausted only to be awakened at an early hour for a repeat performance day after day. We have purposely planned for only three hotels to unpack at, and the tour has been arranged to offer several days of leisure time where the participants can visit the markets, shops, synagogues and places they themselves desire to see at their own tempo.

If you are still undecided, please make your decision soon, since we want to offer all the goodies and amenities that will make it an outstanding and memorable event for A.I.N.A. and all the participants.

A Happy and Healthy New Year to all.

Shalom

## *The Editor's Page*

*by Edward Schuman*

We have recently finished a five week ostrich feather buying trip on behalf of the people who purchased our business. This trip took us to exotic places like London, Bullawayo, Haare, Francistown, Oudtshoorn, Capetown, Johannesburg, Tel-Aviv and Jerusalem. Yes, ostriches are raised in Israel, as those who attend the 25th anniversary tour will see.

The acclamades given as editor of the SHEKEL are truly appreciated. The SHEKEL has become a leading Judaic Numismatic publication. It's contributors, who assist me immensely, deserve honor and "covet".

Ed Janis, our Aleph Beth editor, now has an additional column "A Coin With a Story". Dr. Emanuel A. Smith, a retired Rabbi, has hand written unique numismatic articles, and despite an accidental fall which caused severe injury recently, continues writing for us. Peter S. Horvitz, our Philadelphia school teacher, has always provided the SHEKEL with interesting material. David Hendin, our ancient Jewish coin authority is special.. Shmuel Aviezer, Assistant Director, Currency Department, Bank of Israel, with whom we enjoyed a wonderful visit and dinner in Tel-Aviv, will be writing additional articles on Bank of Israel history. Lance K. Campbell has contributed much in Jewish Holocaust material. Jack Fisher and Mel Wacks always have excellent articles. Manfred Anson, #1 collector of Theodor Herzl, who is working on a manuscript on Herzl in Numismatics, has written several excellent articles. Donna Sims' Club Bulletin, now printed in the SHEKEL, deserves our gratitude for the fine job she does in condensing club news. I am sure names have been omitted, but certainly not intensionally.

We subscribe to five Jewish newspapers and journals and from these often create articles by inserting numismatic connections. I love reading books on Jewish history. Millie & Jack Burman save the Philadelphia Exponent, Henry Kramarz the Jerusalem Post, Anita & Manny Wolin the Long Island JewishWorld newspapers. Numismatic publications are sent by Moe Weinschel. Our recent acquisition of the twelve volume Jewish Encyclopedia circa 1901 will provide a treasure chest of material and augment the Encyclopedia Judaica we use. The accolades must be shared.

In this issue is a unique technical article by Ya'akov Mead. It contains numerical equations many readers including myself will not understand. However it offers several new theories and facts on meltages which are important in determining Israel commemoratives true rarity and value.

Our SHEKEL is 40 pages bi-monthly. It could be 48 pages, or even a monthly magazine if A.I.N.A. had the income. I will make a promise. If each reader will sign up a new member, money will be available and this goal can be achieved. Please help build our organization.





# A.I.N.A.'s 25th Anniversary Medal

## Geometry and Numerology

### גיאומטריה - גמטריה

By NATHAN SOBEL N. L. G.

GEOMETRY - גיאומטריה

Whenever I have been asked to design a medal, many things go through my mind. It becomes a labor of love to create the art and design and find the appropriate motif. Frustration can build up, with sleepless nights, until the right combinations are found.

In my mind, the final product has to be more than just a design which appeals to the eye, and tells a story. I always strive to attain a unique idea, which may result or develop from a redesign or lay-out. In addition, I attempt to incorporate a numerological aspect in the work, thus creating an extra dimension.

A major subject or theme is the object of the purpose of a medal. It generally designates some milestone or event, or honors a person or place. In this case, it marks a major milestone, that of A.I.N.A. achieving the age of a quarter century. How does one portray this major achievement of a numismatic organization such as A.I.N.A., when the field of portrayal is but 1½ inches in diameter and the entire design is a centerpiece all within a circle?

And consider the year 1992 as an unusually eventful year, with several major anniversaries; 500th Anniversary of the discovery of America by Columbus; 500th Anniversary of the infamous Spanish Inquisition and expulsion of the Jews; the 25th Anniversary of the reunification of Jerusalem etc.

I have always been intrigued by geometry, its symmetrical shapes and qualities, the undisputed truths, it being the very basis of universal design. Yet never to my knowledge was total geometry utilized in a medal design. Some elements, yes, but not the entire field of shapes. This I endeavored to create in this medal. I started by outlining the triangle, square, pentagon, hexagon and octagon. Any shapes beyond these I consider infinity.

How does one fit all these shapes within a small circle, yet make sense and harmony? I tried to visualize this concept numerous times but to no avail.

Then, one evening, travelling home from work on the subway, tired and frustrated, the design came to my mind. I placed shapes together one by one and soon they fit like a jigsaw puzzle. I had found the design. The rest became easy.

The triangle became the roof of an A.I.N.A. structure which was housing geometry. The two sides I utilized to show a numerical equivalent of "25" in English and Hebrew (כ"ה = 25), and the space below completed the circle with the dates "1967-1992"

## NUMEROLOGY - GEMATRIA

### גמטריה

Gematria is a Hebrew word given to explain the science of

reading something extra into text. Since there are no numbers in the Hebrew alphabet, Hebrew letters are utilized for numbers.

Then numerology came into play. I started searching for the numerical connection for that "unique" something extra. At first nothing, then a bonanza. I added all the sides of the geo-shapes and surprise!, they totaled 25. The total number of corners of all of the shapes equaled 25. The Star of David I inserted into the Hexagon

created a Roman XXV, adding further credence to the design.

That is when I became finally content. I was simply afraid to look further.

When you take this medal, please look for the most obvious geometric shape which I omitted in the design. The first ten people who find the right answer will receive a signed enlarged copy of the original design. Mail the answers to the A.I.N.A. office.



### *Notice of A.I.N.A. Election*

In accordance with the A.I.N.A. By-Laws, the terms of office of two positions of the Board of Governors expire in May. These positions are currently occupied by Moe Weinschel and Donna Sims. This notice is a call for nominations for these positions. Any A.I.N.A. member, in good standing may apply to the A.I.N.A. office for a nominating petition, and be listed on the election ballot. Deadline for the filing of these petitions is March 1st, 1992.



# *The Oranienburger Strasse Synagogue*

*By Henry Kramarz*

Germany's Kristallnacht pogrom on November 10th, 1938 was an end and a beginning. It signaled the end of more than 1000 years of German Jewish history and the beginning of the Holocaust. According to provisional Nazi estimates, 815 shops were destroyed, and 29 warehouses and 171 dwellings set on fire, or otherwise destroyed. 191 synagogues were set on fire and a further 76 completely demolished. Many thousands of windows were broken, the streets were piled high with glass. It is remembered as Kristallnacht, the night of the Broken Glass.

I was in Berlin that night, a lad 12 years old, and experienced the most horrible night of my entire life. Even after 53 years, it is still etched in my mind as if it happened yesterday. I could not believe that the people in Berlin, presumed to be among the most civilized cities in the world, became totally mad with hatred and started burning Jewish homes, businesses and synagogues.

Despite the fact I was born in Berlin, my parents held Polish passports. Two weeks before Kristallnacht, my father was taken away by the Nazis. My mother and I were all alone. This night, we lost our home and all of our possessions. While the Nazi SS soldiers were perpetrating this crime, the German police did absolutely nothing to stop the slaughter and carnage. My mother and I made our way to the Polish consulate. The embassy refused to admit or shelter us despite the fact we held Polish citizenship. We wandered around and finally returned to our own apartment building. A German woman took us in, but for only that night. For weeks afterwards we hid out in cellars, constantly on the run. Eventually we made our way across the border into Holland where my uncle lived. "Stay with us" he said. "England has entered the war. It will soon be over and Hitler will be finished and you can return." "No", I said, "Hitler has taken everything away from us. I never want to go back to Germany." They all perished in the Holocaust. We were able to come to America on the "Rotterdam" December 22nd, 1939, which was the last boat to survive the crossing.

Our family used to attend the Great Synagogue on Oranienburger Strasse which is pictured on the front cover of this issue. This landmark synagogue was built in 1866 in the Oriental style. During the later part of the 19th century, over two hundred large and lavish synagogues were built in Germany. The various legal restrictions on their construction were gradually abolished and the way opened for the integration of the synagogues into their surroundings. Unlike the modest "shuls" of previous ages, secluded in the narrow confines of the Jewish quarters, these new synagogues were monumental. The Jews, who were moving into the larger cities, wanted to make their presence known. As the churches and cathedrals were structures of architectural beauty, so did Jews build their new synagogues.





The Oranienburger Strasse Synagogue was one of the largest synagogues in the world when it was opened. It was the first synagogue which used gas lights to illuminate the interior - instead of the commonly used candles or oil lamps. The hall seated more than 3000 worshippers including 1200 women in the galleries. The *beenum* contained not only the ark, but also had space for the choir and organ. The reader's desk was next to the ark. This was regarded as one of the richest and most fashionable synagogues of its day.

On Kristallnacht it was burned and badly damaged. Tears filled my eyes as I photographed the picture for this page, for I remember the synagogue in all of its beauty and majesty.

The New Jewish community has issued silver and gold medals in .999 fine, commemorating the Oranienburger Strasse Synagogue. The obverse shows a frontal view of the building, the dates 1866-1991 and the legend Neue Synagoge, Berlin. The reverse shows the dates in Hebrew 5626 - 5751, and portrays the unique Jewish Star finial, the ornament that formed the upper extremity of the pinnacle of the main dome of the synagogue



## *About Washington, Adams, Jefferson and Madison by Edward Schuman*

"The Declaration of Independence, the Revolutionary movement and the War itself, crystallized in the mind of the American Jew his thoughts on the subject of equality. The Jew became a more articulate member of society. The role of the passive, sluggish acceptance of civil disabilities is thrown off, for a more alert, more aggressive, more belligerent attitude.

The Revolutionary movement in North America, the reforms of the French Revolution, and the Napoleonic era in Europe, were like gusts of fresh air in a stale, ill-ventilated chamber. The Jew breathed more freely in France and the United States". So wrote historian Anita Libman Lebeson in her book "Jewish Pioneers in America 1492-1848" published some sixty years ago.

One chapter of this fine book contain excerpts of letters written on Jewish topics by our first four presidents. These are the elements that make up this article.

George Washington, showed an open and liberal attitude at all times in his frequently quoted correspondence with Hebrew congregations. So far as can be ascertained, Washington's Jewish associations were exclusively official, although he did rent a house from a Jewish family in suburban Germantown to escape from disease plagued Philadelphia during the fall of 1793. When Washington was inaugurated as president on the 30th of April

1789, within a few days, a letter of congratulations was forwarded by the Savannah Hebrew congregation. Washington replied:

*"I rejoice that a spirit of liberality and philanthropy is much more prevalent than it formerly was among the enlightened nations of the earth, and that your brethren will benefit thereby in proportion as it shall become more extensive; happily the people of the United States have in many instances exhibited examples worthy of imitation."*

When Washington journeyed to Newport on August 17th 1790, he was handed two letters by Moses Sexias, president of the congregation and grand master of the masonic lodge. In his message from the congregation Sexias wrote extolling a government "which to bigotry gives no sanction, to persecution no assistance"

Washington acknowledged the letters shortly afterwards. In his letter to the congregation, he repeated these sentiments. The





A.I.N.A. Bi-centennial medal designed by Edward Janis, incorporated this quotation written by Moses Sexias, but attributed to the president..

In another part of this same letter, Washington also penned:

*" May the children of the stock of Abraham who dwell in this land continue to merit and enjoy the good will of the other inhabitants - while every one shall sit in safety under his own vine and fig tree and there shall be none to make him afraid."*

John Adams, second president of the United States, a champion of religious freedom and separation of church and state, was also a fervent admirer of the Old Testament in the tradition of his New England ancestors.

On the occasion of the dedication of the Mill Street Synagogue in 1818, he wrote to Mordecai N. Noah:

*"I have the occasion to be acquainted with several gentlemen of your nation, and to transact business with some of them, whom I found to be men of liberal minds, as much honor, probity, generosity and good breeding, as I have known in any sect or philosophy. I wish your nation may be admitted to all privileges of citizens in every country of the world. This country has done much. I wish it may do more; and annul every narrow idea in religion, government and commerce."*

In a letter written to his friend Judge Francis Adrian van der Kemp in 1808 he wrote:

*I will insist that the Hebrews have done more to civilize men than any other nation. If I were an atheist and believed in blind eternal fate, I should still believe that fate had ordained the Jews to be the most essential instruments for civilizing the nations. If I were an atheist of the other sect, who believed or pretended to believe that that all is ordered by chance, I should believe that chance had ordered the Jews to preserve and propagate to all mankind the doctrine of a supreme, intelligent, wise, almighty sovereign of the universe which I believe to be the great essential principle of all morality and consequently of all civilization. They are the most glorious nation that ever inhabited the Earth. The Romans and their Empire were but a Bauble in comparison to the Jews. They have given religion to three quarters of the Globe and have influenced the affairs of Mankind more and more happily than any other Nation, ancient or modern"*



It was customary for a medal to be presented to Indian tribe leaders from the Great White Father who ruled the land. These are known as Peace Medals. The obverses portray the president.



The common reverses, show the clasped hands in friendship of an Indian and American, a peace pipe and tomahawk, and the legend Peace and Friendship. The obverse of the John Adams peace medal illustrated was designed by Moritz Furst, a Bavarian Jewish immigrant, who was employed as an engraver by the mint.

Thomas Jefferson, third president of the United States was the foremost advocate of religious freedom among the American founding fathers. He derived his political philosophy from the doctrine of natural law, viewing every man as endowed with the same inalienable rights. In a letter to Jacob DeLa Motta in 1820 he wrote that *"he was happy in the restoration to the Jews of their social rights"*. In 1826, having founded the University of Virginia, he wrote to Isaac Harby to denounce the university for tending to exclude Jews by requiring *"a course in theological reading which their consciences do not permit them to pursue."*

In 1804, in letters exchanged between Albert Gallatin and Jefferson, a *"Mr. Levy of Philadelphia"* was seriously considered

for the post of Attorney General of the United States. Judge Moses Levy of Philadelphia, active in the struggle for American independence, was perhaps the most distinguished Jew during the opening years of the Republic. An able lawyer and a liberal Whig in politics, he served as recorder for the city of Philadelphia 1802-22 and as a Presiding Judge of the District Court of Philadelphia after that. The appointment did not materialize.

Uriah P. Levy was a close personal friend. It was he, after Jefferson's death, who purchased and restored Monticello, Jefferson's home. In 1833, Levy also presented to the nation a bronze statue of Jefferson. This statue was the first object of its kind ever owned by the United States Government.

Jefferson had a warm, sympathetic understanding of the position of minority groups subjected to the domination by an aggressive majority.



James Madison, the fourth President, was the son of a prominent Episcopalian family. As he considered a career in the ministry, he spent hours in the study of Hebrew and theology.





Throughout his political career, he contended that complete religious liberty was essential for harmonious society and that religious institutions established by the state engendered "ignorance and corruption."

While serving as a congressman, he borrowed money from Haym Salomon whom he referred to gratefully in a letter. Writing to Mordecai M. Noah in 1818, he expressed delight at the blessings conferred upon Jews by religious liberty in America and as "having ever regarded the freedom of religious opinions and worship as equally belonging to every sect."

During his presidency, he appointed several Jews to government posts. Mordecai M. Noah as consul general for Tunis, John Hays as collector for the Indian Territory, and Joel Hart as Consul at Leith, Scotland.

*To the President of the United States of America.*

*Sir*

*Permit the children of the stock of Abraham to express you with the most cordial affection and salute for your pious efforts. And to join with our fellow citizens in welcoming you to America.*

*With pleasure we reflect on these days - these days of difficulty, of dangers when the God of Israel, who delivered David from the peril of the sword - shielded your head in the day of battle: - And we try to think that the same spirit, who testified in the Person of the greatly beloved David, enabling him to preserve over the Provinces of the Babylonian Empire, test and ever will test upon you, enabling you to discharge the arduous duties of Chief Magistrate in these States.*

*Depressed as we heretofore have been of the inviolable rights of free citizens, we now with a deep sense of gratitude to the Almighty Author of all events behold a Government, created by the Majesty of the People. - a Government which too highly gives no sanction, to persecution no assistance - but generously striving to still liberty of conscience, and immunities of citizenship: - securing every one, of whatever Nation, tongue, or language equal parts of the great governmental Machine: -*

# *The Mystery of the Wavy Line*

*By Ralph L. Fusco*

In the second year of Freedom, 133 C.E., two ornaments were added to the Bar Kokhba Tetradrachms above the cornice (top) of the temple shown on these coins. One such ornament was a starlike design which many authorities contend is an allusion to Bar Kokhba being the Messiah. Rabbi Akiba cited the passage in Numbers; *There shall step a star out of Jacob and a scepter shall rise out of Israel...* when referring to Shimon Ben Kosiba as Bar Kokhba, (son of a star)<sup>1</sup>.




The other ornament was, what appears like on some Tetradrachms, a wavy line above the Temple facade. Many explanations have been given as to what this wavy line represented. One historian holds that the wavy line connotes the pillar of fire. Paul Romanoff contends that the wavy line suggests clouds representing divine presence<sup>2</sup>. Mildenberg even refers to it as snake like. (Mildenberg footnote p.44).

I suggest that they are all incorrect. Very often historians attempt to read into a work much more than was originally intended. The fact is that in Year 2 of Freedom, there were additions made to the temple facade on the Tetradrachms. The temple shown in Year 1, 132 C.E., was a free standing building. The actual temple was surrounded by courts and Balustrades (short pillar like railings). The omission was corrected in Year 2 with the addition of what appears to be a horizontal



ladder beneath the temple which Mildenberg suggests representing the Balustrades<sup>3</sup>. This added feature is evident on all Year 2 of Freedom Tetradrachms and those undated.

But what about the wavy line above the temple? There is one specimen of Tetradrachm in which the wavy line looks 



(Mildenberg plate #88). I believe that this specimen is very important. As the engravers for the dies for the Tetradrachms, were correcting their omissions with regard to the Balustrades, I suggest they added the ornament that existed above the cornice on the Second Temple.

The Second Temple had ornaments along the top as one may recall from photographs of replicas of the temple, or as one might see shown on the model of the Temple Mount which is on display at the Jerusalem Holyland Hotel. The wavy line in plate #88 bears a remarkable resemblance to the Crenelated (form with square indentations) cornices that existed on the tops of many buildings and walls that existed on the Temple Mount. (see also Mildenberg, P.44). This type of design can be seen today on the top of parts of the wall surrounding the Old City of Jerusalem.

The mystery of the wavy lines may finally be solved. The wavy line was not intended to be a wavy line with a hidden meaning, but rather an addition to the top of the Temple facade for architectural accuracy.

<sup>1</sup>Yona Ovitz: The Messianic Idea Behind the Bar Kokba Rebellion 1972

<sup>2</sup>Paul Romanoff: Jewish Symbols on Ancient Jewish Coins 1971

<sup>3</sup>Leo Mildenberg: The Coinage of the Bar Kokhba War, 1984



# Bezael and Boris Schatz

By Dr. Emanuel A. Smith

*Bezael is the Biblical artisan, son of Uri, who constructed and decorated the "Ark of the Covenant" and Tabernacle (Ex.36.2)...*

On the wall facing the author's desk, hangs in an enclosed velvet padded frame, a silver rectangular plaque. It is a low relief of an old Rabbi officiating at the closing ceremony of the Sabbath evening called *Havdalah*.

The head of the Rabbi fits into a semicircular space at the top of the rectangular plaque. He is wearing an oriental headdress of the traditional Yemenite garb with the rope brim. The Rabbi's furrowed brow, closed eyes, and tilted head, with his curling side locks flowing into a voluminous beard, makes the observer aware of the high spiritual mood and reverence that is revealed.

The blessing of the wine, the torch flame and the blessing over the various spices signify symbolically the termination of Sabbath into the ordinary week.

Below the composition of the head, at the lower left side of the plaque is the oversized wine cup with the undersize hand that holds it.

In the lower margin of the plaque we find engraved in open formed letters the Hebrew word *Havdalah* (HVDLA). The size of this plaque is 2 3/4" X 1 3/4" and does not mention the artist's name.

The distinction between medal and plaque is fundamental to the understanding of the art of creating metal commemoratives.

The medal is related to the round coin, presents two sides an obverse and reverse. The plaque whose outline is frequently not round, has its presentation on one side alone. While the medal is usually struck, the plaque is often cast. Because of this less restrictive technique, the creator of a plaque does not need the experience of a medalist. The difference also influences size.

Our *Havdalah* plaque was originally modeled in clay in a larger size, from which a mold was made in casting plaster. This mold then accepted the molten bronze which was poured into the cavity, thus giving us a finished representation of the original modeled clay design.

It seems that there must have been a public demand for copies for the trade, and thus smaller pieces were mechanically reproduced in our *Havdalah* plaque size, by either casting in silver, or stamping from a die.

The *Havdalah* service is one of blessings at the termination of Sabbaths and festivals, in order to emphasize the distinction between the sacred and the ordinary. *Havdalah* is one of the most ancient blessing ceremonies. A number of verses were added at the beginning as a good omen. These usually commence with "Behold, God is my Salvation", (Isaiah 12:2-3).



Three views are mentioned in the Jerusalem Talmud. *Havdalah* was originally inserted in the *Amidah* (standing prayer) and then transferred to the cup of wine "for the benefit of the children"; it was instituted in both places at the same time.

In present practice it is to recite the proper *Havdalah* blessing over a cup of wine as in the case of *Kiddish*, the Friday night Sabbath wine blessing.

The practice of the blessing over the light, "who creates the light of the fire" is to show that work is now permitted and to stress the departure of the Sabbath. The reason for the blessing over the assorted spices has not been clarified. It is explained as a compensation to the Jew for the loss of "additional soul" (*Neshamah Yeshayrah*), which traditionally accompanies the Jew throughout the Sabbath. Other reasons have also been suggested.

There are many customs connected with the *Havdalah* service; the pouring of some of the wine onto the ground as an omen of blessing and hence the overflowing of the cup; passing the last drops of wine in the cup over the eyes, and extinguishing the flame with the remaining drops; when blessing over the light flame, some look at their fingernails and some at the lines in their palms.

After the *Havdalah* service it is customary to chant special hymns, the best known are "May He who sets the holy and ordinary apart" and *Elizah the Prophet*"



Of all the Jewish ceremonial religious silver objects, this *Havdalah* plaque seems to have the greatest tension and religious fervor far and above others of this category.

The artist who created this masterpiece was Boris Schatz, the known painter and sculptor (1867-1932). He became well known because he established and founded the Bezalel School of Art in Jerusalem.

Schatz hoped to realize his dream of national and folkloristic Jewish art. His statue of Mattathias the Hasmonean which he created in a dramatic form attracted much notice. King Ferdinand of Bulgaria invited him to Sophia to establish an academy of art. For ten years, he held this post at the academy.



Theodor Herzl Commemorative 1904



Boris Schatz  
circa 1925

Blessing over the Sabbath Candles



Joseph Trumpeldor





His work is characterized by symbolic meaning and spirituality like other Jewish artists. He was more consumed with the content than the external form.

Boris Schatz was born in Varna, a province of Kovno, Lithuania. He was the son of a Hebrew teacher and attended the Yeshiva of Vilna (Rabbinical school), but later left his family and religious studies and turned to art.

In 1889 he moved to Paris where he studied and worked under the sculptor Antokolsky and the painter Cormon. In 1895 he was in Bulgaria as founder of the Academy of Art. In 1900 he was awarded a gold medal in the Paris salon for the "Head of an old Woman".

After meeting Theodor Herzl in 1903, he became an ardent Zionist. Schatz first proposed the idea of an art school at the 1905 Zionist Congress and when his idea was accepted, traveled to Palestine to establish the school. Three years later, he settled in Jerusalem where he opened the Bezalel School of Art to which he added a small museum. He arranged exhibitions of the Bezalel art in Europe and in the United States. During World War I, the school was closed down and Schatz was held prisoner by the Turks for ten months. He succeeded in obtaining funds in the United States for the construction of his school and museum.

Boris Schatz died in Denver, Colorado in 1932 while on a successful fund raising mission.

The school was closed on his death but reopened a year later with a government grant.

The Bezalel School provided a young generation of artists and craftsman the opportunity to study in the country and fostered a national style of arts and crafts based on European techniques and Near Eastern art forms. Their sources were Biblical and archaeological.

Schatz was a prolific artist concentrating mainly on sculpture. His work is characterized by a nationalistic romanticism. From 1903 on, he worked almost entirely in Jewish themes, representing religious practices, Jewish leaders, and Biblical subjects. His Theodor Herzl commemorative plaque made in 1904 and a plaque of Joseph Trumpeldor are also used to illustrate this article.

Most of his Judaic works were low relief sculptured reliefs as in the *Havdalah* silver plaque (illustrated). They were small, portable, cast or stamped by dies and easily framed and exhibited much as paintings hung on the wall.

Boris Schatz was converted to the cause of Theodor Herzl, namely Zionism, and from then on used his creative powers to design art works beautifying Judaism. The State of Israel recognized Boris Schatz's contribution to the rebirth of the State through the Bezalel School of Art and art education, and has therefor memorialized him with a resting place on Mount Scopus, Jerusalem.

# *Who Paid for the Champagne?*

## *by David Pryce-Jones*

Edward VII, who became King of Great Britain and Ireland in 1901, was the oldest son of Queen Victoria. He had a number of Jewish friends and at that time, it was mooted on court circles and in the press that he would not have kept such company without an ulterior motive.

As Prince of Wales, Edward had been the victim of his mother's virtues. Out of what she considered thrift, Queen Victoria had made sure that he could not afford his extravagances. As La Goulue, the dancer, immortalized by Toulouse-Lautrec, shouted across the Moulin Rouge one night. "Allo, Wales! Tu paies le champagne?" Assorted Rothschilds and Sassoons could be relied on to pay for as much champagne as necessary.

Edward borrowed £60,000 from Baron Hirsch, and this debt was waived. Hirsch also left him a house in Newmarket, though he never used it. The destruction of relevant records may suggest that the Rothschilds also may have helped out financially.

Sir Edward Cassel brilliantly managed a private fund for Edward of about £20,000. As the King lay on his deathbed, Cassel slipped him £10,000. Princess Alexandra, the daughter of King Christian IX of Denmark, whom he married in 1863, found the empty envelope, which had most probably been destined to the last royal mistress, a Mrs. Keppel.

Keeping a watchful eye on Edward, the courtiers and officials could never quite persuade themselves that her actually liked these Jewish friends of his, even preferring them to the dull autocrats with whom he was supposed to associate.

The King had a Jewish doctor (Sir Felix Semon) and a Jewish lawyer (Sir George Lewis). It was a matter of temperament that he was attracted to successful and self-made men. The Sassoons traded in the Far East. Hirsch obtained railway concessions in the Ottoman Empire as did Cassel, who was unprecedentedly wealthy. He had extended his investments into America, Mexico and Sweden and into mining and banking. Cassel received the concession for the Bank of Egypt.

Nouveau rich himself, the King shared their tastes for banquets, sports and horse racing. If these like minded people wanted invitations to court balls, shooting weekends and similar ostentations then they should be allowed to have them.

Courtiers and cartoonists were too close to judge those historical phenomenon for what it was. More than mere social climbers and snobs, these Jews around the King were among the first to have grown up in a world which had abolished legal disabilities previously imposed on them as Jews, and therefore they were at last able to compete on equal terms



with Gentiles.

On the ensuing burst of creativity and enterprise, their counterparts were doing exactly the same thing in every European country. But on the continent, they were treated as interlopers, and new reasons to exclude them were being devised.

Edward VII made Jews acceptable in a period which coincided with Russian pogroms, the Dreyfus affair, and the Austro-German racism which was already at that time breeding Hitler. Edwardian vulgarity helped to save England

from European anti-Semitism.

This article was found by your editor in the Telegraph, a British newspaper while flying to South Africa from London in September. The numismatic connection is provided by a City of London medal issued to commemorate the visit of Alexandra to that city in March of 1863. The obverse portrays Alexandra, an extremely beautiful woman. The reverse shows her, together with Edward, then Prince of Wales, being welcomed by an allegorical representation of the City of London.





## *A Coin With A Story #2*

*By Edward Janis*



As a nation of romantics, we believe what we see in the movies. One of our misconceptions is Cleopatra was one of the great beauties of all times. Hollywood in its heyday produced an epic with the glamorous Claudette Colbert as the lover of not only Caesar but also of Marc Anthony. When she fell on her asp screams were heard and tears flowed. In my circles Cleopatra would be called as "maiskeit". Her portrait on various coins prove she was no beauty. Cleopatra did not consider herself beautiful. It was her winning ways, her charm and her ability to handle people that made her irresistible.

Mark Anthony together with Octavian and Lepidus were the trio of Second Triumvirate: Rulers of Rome and all its possessions. After the Battle of Philippi, Marc Anthony visited his lands in Asia where he met Cleopatra. Her charm soon won out and he forgot about his wife Octavia, sister of Octavian and after eight years of marriage, he repudiated his wife.

According to Kadman, the coins of Akko Ptolemais with countermarks are very scarce. The study is based on 1200 coins which lists only 15 countermarks. The first two, appear on three coins; two on K(adman)70 and one on K63. These are pre-colonial Roman period and are dated 44/3 B.C.E. Since the book publication, an additional coin of the same year but with different dies (K71) with the same countermark has surfaced.

The countermark is the eagle standing to the right enclosed in a square. On this countermark Kadman writes: *"This eagle has sometimes been explained as the common Ptolemaic type and its application upon the coins of Ptolemais was taken as an indication for the occupation of the city by Egyptian forces. Both coins, however, are dated 44/3 B.C.E. and it is impossible that in the second half of the first century Egyptian forces could have played any part in Phoenicia. It seems, on the other hand, not unlikely that the Ptolemaic eagle was stamped on the coins of Ptolemais in honor of Queen Cleopatra VII of Egypt when she married Marc Anthony at Antioch in summer 37 B.C.E."*

These rare early countermarked pieces are certainly very early marriage commemoratives and as such the countermarks that appear on many of the city coins of Ancient Judea and Samaria certainly add another dimension to an ancient coin.



Obverse of K71 shows head of Zeus with the countermark of the Egyptian eagle



## *The New Look of Israel's Commemorative Coins*

by **SHMUEL AVIEZER**

*Assistant Director, Currency Dept., Bank of Israel*

Issuing commemorative coins is, by nature, a dynamic process. When such a coin is scheduled to appear comprehensive research is carried out in the Bank of Israel Currency Department in order to examine all the aspects of the subject that the coin is intended to commemorate. Apart from the historical importance of what a commemorative coin portrays, a wide understanding of the chosen subject is undoubtedly instrumental in assisting the artist who designs the coin. The accumulated data will enable the artist to create a coin with a clear message which is also pleasing to the eye.

Israel has been issuing commemorative coins since its tenth anniversary in 1958. The first and most important series is the one that is issued every Independence Day and depicts a national event, anniversary or achievement. This series represents perpetually changing motifs, as its character requires. It is the most prestigious Israeli commemorative series and well deserves the respected position the collectors have bestowed on it.

The second series, which was launched one year after the Independence Day Series, is that of Hanukka coins. Its appearance is always scheduled to coincide with the Festival of Lights which falls in near December. Most of the coins in this series, which was suspended for nine years between 1968 and 1978 depict Hanukka lamps from different Jewish communities all over the world. By 1990 twenty five coins had been issued in this series. For some time, however, the idea of adorning this series with other Jewish relics had been brewing in the heads of those responsible for the issuing coins in the Currency Department of the Bank of Israel, as well as of the management of the Israel Government Coins and Medals Corp., which markets the coins. While the possibility of portraying more Hanukka lamps in the future was not discounted, the time seemed ripe to depict other Jewish sacred vessels and objects, thereby widening the scope by this traditional series.

Thus, the Public Committee for Planning Banknotes and Coins, under the chairmanship of Supreme Justice (ret.) Mr. Moshe Landau, recently chose the Jewish objects listed below to appear on forthcoming coins. The new series, now retitled "Judaica Art" to embrace a wide range of items, will begin appearing in December 1991.



<u>Year of issue</u>	<u>Obverse</u>	<u>Reverse</u>
1991	Kiddush cup, Germany, 19th century; Collection of Z. Akster of Holland.	Modern Kiddush cup, designed by Zelig Segal, Jerusalem.
1992	Three-branched Shabbat Candelabrum, Poland, 19th century; Israel Museum Collection	Modern Shabbat Candelabrum, designed by Zelig Segal, Jerusalem.
1993	Spice Tower, Spain, 13th century; Victoria and Albert Museum, London.	Modern spice tower, designed by Hannah Bechar-Panet, Jerusalem.

The motifs are depicted on both sides of the coin, illustrating the old vis-a-vis the new. While this is quite an innovation in Israeli commemoratives, it is not the only feature which distinguishes this phase of the series. Two other "firsts" should be noted:

- 1) The silver contents of the coins are augmented to the sterling silver quality of 985.
- 2) The proof category of the series has been elevated to the Crown diameter of 38.7 mm.

The process of change has also affected the other series that has been issued regularly for the last nine years, namely, sites in the Holy land. The following sites have been portrayed: Qumran, Herodion, Valley of Kidron, Capernaum, Akko, Jericho, Caesarea, Jaffa and the Sea of Galilee. Due to the gradual decline of public interest in this series, however, a refreshing new look, transcending the limitations of subjects for this series, has been carefully considered, and it was recently decided to portray the flora and fauna of the Holy land. This retains the link with the Holy land while expanding the scope of the motifs suitable for depiction on the coins.





After consultation with experts in the botany and wildlife of Israel, the public committee mentioned above, chose to devote the next three coins to animals and plants of the Holy land as described in the King Solomon's "Songs of Songs".

In this series, too, both the obverse and the reverse carry motifs, wildlife on one, plants on the other.

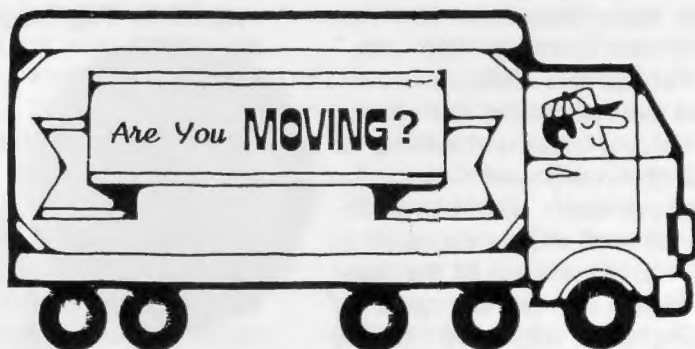
The series will start to appear in 1992, and will bear the following illustrations, quoting the relevant verse in the "Song of Songs" in English and Hebrew:

<u>Year of issue</u>	<u>Obverse</u>	<u>Reverse</u>
1991	Two cedars, and the words "Excellent as the cedars" (5:15).	A dove, and the words "Thou hast doves' eye" (4:1).
1992	Lily, and the words "Lily of the Valleys" (2:1).	Roe, and the words "Like to a roe" (8:14).
1993	Apples, and the words "As the apple tree" (2:3).	Hart, and the words "A young hart" (8:14).

Whereas no gold version of the Hanukka series was issued, the present series has two editions of gold coins: one, in the customary gold category of 8.68 grams, with a diameter of 88 mm, and the other, a totally new gold issue for the Israeli numismatics, a thin 18 mm coin, weighing only 3.46 grams.

In addition to the new look, in both motifs and shape, of Israel's commemorative coins, one special new coin is currently being prepared. It is designed to commemorate the 150th anniversary of Bnei Brith in 1993.

These innovations in the design of Israel's commemorative coins are bound to generate strengthened interest in Israeli numismatics, enriching the collections of numismatists all over the world.



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## How a Mezuzah got in the Church Compound

by *Leo Heiman*

*Reprinted from Jewish Digest Apr 1965*

Isaac Cohen, a burly forty six year old Jerusalem shoemaker is an observant Jew. He lives in a small two room flat in a compound surrounding the Church of Notre Dame de France in Jerusalem. The building is owned by the church. Cohen's hole in the wall shop is in the same building.

He used to live on the Old City of Jerusalem, where he was born, but when the Arabs captured the city during the 1948 war of Independence, Cohen fled. Homeless and destitute, he moved his family into the shell battered Church of Notre Dame, then situated in the no-man's land between the Arab and Jewish front lines, which suffered heavy damages.

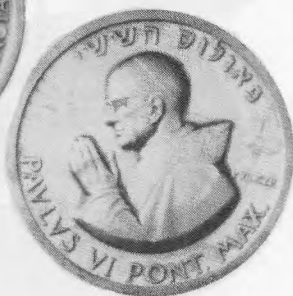
After Israel became independent, the Church remained in Israeli territory. The priests and monks who repaired the building could have evicted Cohen and his family as illegal squatters, but they let him stay. "You are refugees made homeless by war, and it is our duty to help you," Father Fabian told Cohen.

Cohen moved out of the church proper into a nearby building in the church compound. He pays only nominal rent. His only problem was how to affix a mezuzah to his door. But how could he hang up a mezuzah on the doorpost of a building that belonged in the Catholic Church compound? He went to see Father Fabian about the problem and was told, "Go ahead, hang up your mezuzah.

After all, Jesus had a mezuzah on his door too. We never forget that."

When Pope Paul arrived in the Old City of Jerusalem in 1965, the bells of the Church of Notre Dame, which is close by the Mandlebaum Gate frontier between Israel and Jordan, began to toll. Father Fabian, and his younger assistant Brother Theo, were pulling on the bell ropes. "Father Fabian is no longer young," Cohen said, "and I saw he was beginning to tire after pulling on the ropes for nearly an hour, so I asked his permission to help. That's how I, Isaac Cohen, an Orthodox Jew, became the first Jew to have run the bells of a Catholic Church for the arrival of a Pope in Jerusalem. I rang them for fifty five minutes."

Several medals were struck in commemoration of the visit of Pope Paul VI to Jerusalem. Paul Vincze has long been recognized as one of the foremost Jewish sculptors in the world today. The illustrated medal is 2¼" diameter, and is struck in silver as a medallic tribute on the occasion of the Holy Pilgrimage to Israel.





# AGRIPPA I

by M. BRANN, Ph.D

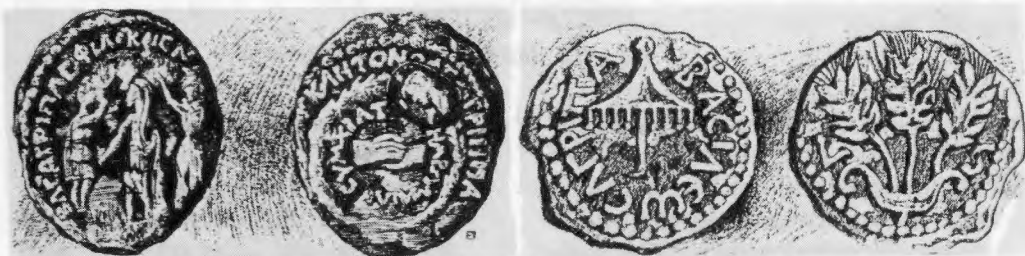
**AGRIPPA I.** (also known as Herod Agrippa I.): King of Judea was born about the year 10 B.C.E. His career, with its abundant and extreme vicissitudes, illustrates in a remarkable manner the complete dependence of the royal family of Judea, even for the means of subsistence, upon the favor of the Roman emperors of the first century.

When six years of age he was sent to Rome for his education, and there enjoyed the companionship of the gifted Drusus Caesar, son Tiberius. The extravagance of court life accustomed him to splendor and luxury, and his prospects, which were brilliant, were the means of furnishing him with a never failing supply of money, of which he availed himself in the style of a spendthrift. But his circumstances were changed in the year 23, when his friend and patron, Drusus, died suddenly. From that hour the emperor declined to receive the high-spirited young man, and very soon his boon companions also forsook Agrippa. Destitute of all resources, he meditated suicide; but at the request of his wife Cypros, his sister Herodias, who had been since about the year 25 the wife of the tetrarch Herod Antipas, took pity on Agrippa and secured for him the appointment of market overseer in her new capital, Tiberias. But even his new fortune did not last as his brother-in-law took every opportunity to make Agrippa feel his dependent position. This Agrippa found too much to endure. He resigned his post, and, after many adventures, returned to Rome in 36.

Here, once again, he succeeded in overcoming ill fortune by securing the patronage of the heir apparent, Caligula. With this return to prosperity his extravagant ideas resumed sway over him and brought him to want. Deeming himself free from listeners, he was one day thoughtless enough openly to wish for the time when Caligula would ascend the throne of the Caesars. When this remark was carried to the aged Tiberius, he had him loaded with chains and cast into prison. He suffered here for six months in constant terror of death, until Caligula, having become emperor, freed him with his own hands, and appointed him to the tetrarchy of his uncle Philip, and to that of Lysanias, giving him the title of king. To these honors the senate added the rights and title of pretor.

This wonderful change in his fortune excited the undisguised envy of his sister Herodias, and led her to urge her incapable husband to secure for himself at least equal rank and titles from the emperor. But Agrippa defeated her purpose. Her petition to the emperor was forestalled by a message from Agrippa, containing half-veiled intimations that his brother-in-law was meditating treason and independence. This was sufficient to destroy Herod Antipas. Land and throne were taken from him, and the districts of Galilee and the south of Perea, administered by him, were transferred to the charge of Agrippa (39).

The king soon found opportunity to gain the gratitude and good wishes of his coreligionists. Caligula, whose



Copper Coin of Agrippa I. Celebrating Treaty with Rome.  
(From Madden, "Coins of the Jews.")

Copper Coin of Agrippa I. Showing Royal Umbrella.  
(From Madden, "Coins of the Jews.")

Borders of the Jewish State: Maximum extent during the Reign of Agrippa I  
(37—44 A.D.)



Borders of the Jewish State of Agrippa I  
Maximum extent of borders of the Jewish State

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extravagant desires and cruelty savored of insanity, conceived the idea of ordering that his statues be set up in all temples and receive divine honors. The Jews alone dared to offer resistance to this decree. They induced the Syrian governor, Petronius, to postpone this desecration of the sanctuary for a long time, and he at last determined to inform the emperor that the execution of his order would be impossible without terrible massacres. Agrippa happened to be in Rome at that time, and had succeeded in getting from Caligula a repeal of his odious edict (Philo, "Legatio ad Cajum", §§ 30-43). But when Petronius' report arrived that the Jews would rather suffer death than permit the erection of the imperial statues in their Temple, the emperor canceled his repeal, and ordered the forcible execution of his command. Fortunately, the tidings that the imbecile tyrant had been murdered by his body-guard arrived before his instructions to put his commands into effect (41). His successor, Claudius, showed himself grateful to Agrippa for important services rendered him, and upon his accession, placed under his rule the remainder of Palestine, the territories of Samaria, Judea, and Idumaea, formerly governed by Archelaus. Loaded with honors and titles, Agrippa returned home, and the few remaining years of his benevolent sway afforded the people a brief period of peace and prosperity. The evil consequences of a ruler's unbridled passions and tyranny had been sufficiently evident to him in Rome, and they had taught him moderation and strict self-control. His people regarded him with love and devotion, because he healed with tender hand the deep wounds inflicted upon the national susceptibilities by

brutal Roman governors. He ruled his subjects with compassion and friendliness. Like the ancestral Asmoneans from whom he sprang through his noble grandmother Mariamne, he honored the Law. Like the merest commoner, he carried his basket of firstfruits to the Temple; with the people he celebrated appropriately the Feast of Tabernacles, and he devoted to the sanctuary a golden chain with which Caligula had honored him. On one occasion, while in the street, he met a bridal procession which drew up to let him pass, but he halted and bade it take precedence. He sought to lighten taxation, remitting the impost on houses in Jerusalem. On the coins minted by him he carefully avoided placing any symbols which could offend the people's religious sentiment. Thus, prosperity and comfort seemed to be dawning anew for the Jews.

The Romans, however, became jealous of this rising prosperity, and – sometimes covertly, sometimes openly – laid all manner of obstacles in his way. When he began to repair the fortifications of the capital, he was abruptly bidden to cease. His attempts to fraternize with neighboring peoples – vassals of Rome – were construed as portending rebellion. His sudden death at the games in Caesarea, 44, must be considered as a stroke of Roman politics. His death, while in the full vigor of his years, was deeply lamented by his people, notwithstanding the fact that he had made many considerable concessions to heathen manners and customs. The Christians looked upon his death as a judgement for his undisguised hostility to their young community (Acts, xii).

M. Brann was a Professor in the Jewish Theological Seminary, Breslau, Germany. This article appears in the Jewish Encyclopedia published 1901

# The ALPH BETH Page

## ...Dedicated to the Beginner *by Edward Janis*

The following actually happened to me while visiting a well known coin shop in Manhattan recently. A well dressed European approached me at the suggestion of the manager. "Excuse me. This American dealer gave me the bill for the coin I bought at his auction, and then added a 10% lot charge. I read the catalog's terms and it did mention a 10% lot charge, but I bought only one coin and not a lot of coins and do not understand why I was billed for a lot charge."

I explained to him that all auction sales are broken into segments, portions, groups and units. These by common definition are called individual lots. If there are multiple units (coins, sets etc.) there usually appears a numerical identification in the number of units in the lot such as "contains 7 pieces." These lots are given a number 1,2,3 etc. up to the last lot of the sale. A buyer bids on a specific lot, and pays his 10% or 5% whatever the lot charge is or maybe even nothing if the sale does not specify a lot charge. This buyer's charge is paid on the knock down purchase price of the lot, and not whether there were ten pieces or one piece in the lot. Lot charges in numismatic auctions are comparatively new and were brought about by the high costs of catalog printings, mailings and advertising.

"Ah, now I understand, but why do they call it lot when it's only one coin?"

As an insight to our readers, in American coin sales in the 1870's and 1880's, the pricing of lots were different. For example, Lot 1 of the Bangs & Co. auction sale held on Monday, December 16th, 1878 is described as follows: 1857, '58, '60, '61, '62, '63, and '64 Uncirculated Nickel cents 15 pieces. The lot sold for  $3\frac{1}{2}c$ . The bidding was for the cost of each piece in the lot. Therefor, the successful bidder paid  $52\frac{1}{2}c$  for the lot. The same bidder also bought lot 6 consisting of five uncirculated 2 cent bronze coins at  $4\frac{1}{2}c$ . This totaled  $22\frac{1}{2}c$ . Bangs & Co. received 75c for the two lots from this buyer.

Q. You have sometimes described coins as having legends, and other times as having inscriptions. Aren't they the same thing? D.Y. Erie, Pa.

A. Sometimes the two words are used interchangeably. To simplify the explanation look at the obverse of a U.S. Washington quarter. *Liberty* above Washington's head is a legend. *In God We Trust* under Washington's chin is an inscription. Legends follow the circular border of a coin or medal. Inscriptions are usually horizontal and whose letters are in a straight line or lines. Inscriptions may also appear in a vertical position. A best example of an inscription are the lettered edge inscriptions on Israel Anniversary Commemorative coins. Even though the inscription is circular, it is still an inscription because the base line of the letters are on a straight line and not on a curve.



# ISRAEL COMMEMORATIVE COINS: ART, SENTIMENT, HISTORY, AND INVESTMENT

*by Ya'akov Mead*

The State of Israel has issued since 1958 a now extensive series of coins commemorating important events and personages in the history of Israel and of the Jewish people. Among the important events honored are the tenth anniversary of the establishment of the State of Israel, Israel's victory in the Six Day War of 1967 and Liberation of Jerusalem, and the establishment of peace with Egypt in 1979. Among the important personages honored are Theodore Herzl, David Ben Gurion, and Edmond de Rothschild. The striving and struggle of Jews in many countries to immigrate to Israel have been depicted and celebrated on a number of coins, both directly and by implication. A series of coins has been issued at the festival of Hannukah for which Hannukah lamps from various countries and times have been depicted.

These coins illustrate a number of trends in artistic fashions. Silver crown commemoratives issued from 1958 to 1968 were markedly concave, with wide rims. They typically have stark modernistic stylized lines, with a few strokes sketching the essence of the subject and suggesting the tough, no-nonsense character of the country and its people. The coins are uncompromising in their emphasis of the successful revival of Hebrew as the spoken language of Israel through the absence of legends in other languages on the coins, excepting the name Israel in Arabic and English.

From 1969, changes in character begin to become evident. First, the stark concavity of earlier issues is replaced by a planar face. Over time, the hard stark stylized lines have tended to be replaced by softer, more three-dimensional depictions of persons, places, and documents. Hebrew yields its exclusivity as legends in English have increasingly been added to the coins since the mid 1970s.

The economic history of the State of Israel is also suggested as a series of crown size five Israel Lira (IL) coins issued from 1958 to 1967 was succeeded by a series of crown size ten Israel Lira (IL) coins issued from 1967 to 1974, and then succeeded by a series of ever higher pound (IL) denominations through 1980 as Israel's economy approached an inflationary crisis. From 1980, Israel pretended to address its economic problems when it replaced the Lira with the Israel Sheqel (IS), a change which is reflected in the coins issued from 1980 to 1985. When, in 1985, it was manifest to all that the previous attempts at reform had been largely ineffective, and inflation was beginning to approach hyper-inflationary levels, a serious attempt to address economic problems was undergirded with a disciplined policy to desist from inflationary increases in the money supply, and joined with the establishment of a new currency, the New Israel Sheqel (NIS). This change is also documented in the coin issues since that time.

World economic history of the last generation is reflected in the progressive debasement of the silver commemoratives through the latter years of the 1970s, as the price of silver approached unheard-of levels by 1979 and 1980. The debasement of the coinage in the 1970s reflects also the divided motives underlying the issuance of Israel's commemorative coins. The motives include a desire to chronicle Israel's renewed independence, the people who have played significant roles in it, and to

raise money for a variety of worthy causes. Motives of fund-raising, and of making available legal tender coins for the fulfillment of ritual religious obligations both tend to promote large mintages, and do not necessarily argue against coinage debasement. Motives of collectors and investors are opposed on these counts. Both tend to seek more limited mintages and coins with larger metallic values to assure the coins' roles as a store of value in the face of inflation and other uncertainties.

Coin issuers and collectors and investors may cooperate to mutual advantage through the production and distribution of a continuing series of coins with mintages limited by the ability of the market to absorb them. In this interaction, collectors and investors seem to have the upper hand, in that an unwanted issue may remain largely unsold.

From the standpoint of the investor, a "collectible" gains value from the factors of 1) the size of the potential market of people who may desire to purchase it, 2) its rarity, and 3) its value in the market as raw material. For different "collectibles", these factors will be present in differing proportions. The size of the potential market for an item is influenced by the subject matter of its design and the artistic success of the design effort among other factors.

This article is an attempt to motivate and describe the factors underlying the market for Israel's silver and gold commemorative coins. The three factors noted above were examined in the following manner. Current sales offer prices were obtained from the price lists of a reputable dealer. Data about coin weight and fineness were collected from Silvia Haffner Magnus' (4th edition, 1988), and translated into pure silver and gold content weights (in Troy ounces) respectively.

To facilitate separation of influences on coin prices, an implicit basic metal value of the coinage series was estimated by translating the market price of each coin into its implicit silver value as a standard one Troy ounce piece. The minimum price offered by the dealer per Troy ounce for any piece was found (\$8.29), and the ratio of each coin's Troy ounce silver price to that minimum then calculated. Such ratios might be influenced by 1) the size of the market for the particular coin, 2) its rarity, and 3) the size of the piece.

Mintage were collected also from Silvia Haffner Magnus' (4th edition, 1988). In the multiple linear regression analyses performed, the mintages were represented as natural logarithms, because the effect of scarcity tends to increase market values much more when quantities are small than when quantities of an identical good are large.

The following highly responsive and significant equation was estimated to explain/predict coin values of Israel's silver commemorative coin series:

$$\begin{aligned} \text{Predicted Price} &= [ 28.15 - 2.14 \times \text{LN (Mintage)} \\ \text{standard error} &\quad (1.38) \quad (0.14) \end{aligned}$$

$$\begin{aligned} & -4.95 \times \text{Silver wt. (oz. Troy)} ] \times \text{Silver wt. (oz. Troy)} \times \text{metal price} \\ & (0.57) \qquad \qquad \qquad \text{Equation 1} \end{aligned}$$

$$R^2 = 0.732 \text{ Number of observations} = 145 \text{ Degrees of Freedom} = 142$$

The minus sign on the mintage coefficient (-2.14) indicates that as the mintage of a coin increases, its collector or investor value tends to decline. The minus sign on the silver weight coefficient (-4.95) indicates that a small coin, other things being equal, will be relatively more expensive than a large coin. That is, adding silver to



a coin but not otherwise changing its design or mintage would increase its value, by less than the factor of weight increase. The correlation coefficient ( $R^2$ ) is a measure of how well the identified factors explain the dependent variable, in this case the coin's price. The value of the coefficient (0.732) indicates that the factors of silver weight and mintage explain 73.2 percent of the variation in the prices of the coins priced. The remaining 26.8 percent of variation would be due to other factors, which would include artistic value of the coin, sentimental importance of the subject depicted, etc.

### SILVER COIN PRICE DETERMINATION BY MINTAGE AND WEIGHT

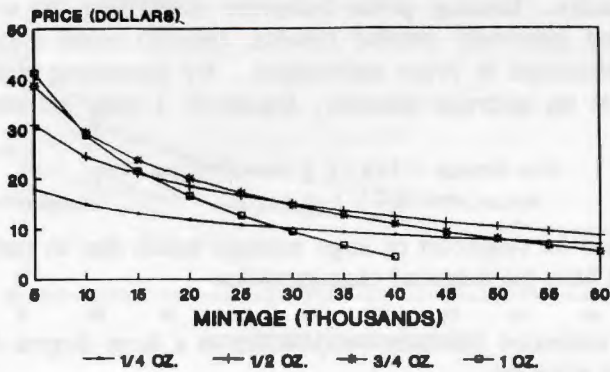


Table 1  
Illustration of the Effect of Silver Weight and Mintage  
on Generic Israeli Silver Commemorative Coin Prices

Silver Weight (oz. Troy)	0.25	0.50	0.75	1.00
Mintage (Thousands)				
5	\$18.00	\$30.86	\$38.59	\$41.19
10	\$14.92	\$24.70	\$29.36	\$28.88
15	\$13.12	\$21.11	\$23.96	\$21.68
20	\$11.84	\$18.55	\$20.13	\$16.57
25	\$10.85	\$16.57	\$17.16	\$12.61
30	\$10.04	\$14.95	\$14.73	\$9.37
35	\$9.36	\$13.58	\$12.68	\$6.64
40	\$8.76	\$12.40	\$10.90	\$4.27
45	\$8.24	\$11.35	\$9.33	
50	\$7.77	\$10.42	\$7.93	
55	\$7.35	\$9.57	\$6.66	
60	\$6.96	\$8.80	\$5.50	

The graph and Table 1 illustrate the operation of Equation 1 described above. They show the price behavior of an arbitrary silver coin from the Israeli commemorative series. By tracing any one of the lines on the graph, it is clear that as mintage increases, price falls at a declining rate. The coins with the highest prices in mintage ranges from 10 to 30 thousand are 3/4 ounces, which is where the 10 IL silver crowns fall. At higher mintages, coins with 1/2 ounce of silver would be more valuable.

The rise of silver prices in the late 1970's has been previously noted. Silvia Haffner Magnus has noted in her book "Israel's Money and Medals" of the large melt-down of silver commemoratives in 1979-80, but expressed the belief that final mintages would never be known. While the lack of records and the multiplicity of individuals and organizations melting coins makes it impossible to know estimated final mintages, those mintages may be estimated by observing the behavior of the market for those coins. Several dealer price lists were examined by the process described here, yielding generally similar results. The figures reported here are from the most extensive data set, and offered the most stable results. Testing price behavior according to a variety of price sets yielded generally similar results, though some showed a significant age component in price estimation. By assuming that the coins melted behave in an average manner, Equation 1 may be re-expressed as follows

$$\text{Final Mintage} = \left[ \frac{28.15 \times \text{Silver Wt. (oz. Troy)}}{\text{Actual price ratio}} \right] / (2.14) \quad \text{Equation 2}$$

Coins that would be suspected of large mintage losses due to melt-down and other losses would have the following characteristics:

1. The prices estimated for them would differ to a large degree from the prices in the price list.
2. The original mintage figures for the coins would have been relatively large.
3. The predicted coin minimum price ratio would be less than one.
4. The coin would have been minted prior to 1980.

Table 2  
Estimated Impact of Melt-downs  
on Israeli Silver Commemorative Coin Mintages

Year	Subject		Original Mintage	Estimated Melt-down	Net Mintage
<b>Independence Commemoratives</b>					
1958/5708	10th Anniversary	IL 5 BU	97,860	53,660	44,200
1973/5733	25th Anniversary	IL10 BU	123,950	78,050	45,900
1974/5734	Ben Yehuda/Hebrew	IL10 BU	127,190	81,290	45,900
<b>Special Issues</b>					
1967/5727	Victory/Six Day War	IL10 BU	234,460	188,560	45,900
1971/5731	Let My People Go	IL10 BU	73,444	27,544	45,900
1974/5734	Ben Gurion	IL25 BU	99,291	55,291	44,000
1974/5734	Ben Gurion	IL25 Prf	64,153	23,153	41,000
<b>Pidyon HaBen Coins</b>					
1973/5733	Pidyon HaBen	IL10 BU	100,670	63,700	36,700
1974/5734	Pidyon HaBen	IL10 BU	108,540	65,940	42,600
1975/5735	Pidyon HaBen	IL25 BU	62,187	19,587	42,600
Total Estimated Melt-down				656,775	
Net Mintage confidence limits					+/- 11,200



keepsake. The minus sign on the gold weight coefficient (-1.97) indicates that a small coin, other things being equal, will be relatively more expensive than a large coin. The value of the correlation coefficient (0.665) indicates that the factors of gold weight and mintage explain 66.5 percent of the variation in the prices among the coins priced. The remaining 33.5 percent of variation would be due to other factors, which would include artistic value of the coin, sentimental importance of the subject depicted, etc.

### GOLD COIN PRICE DETERMINATION BY MINTAGE AND WEIGHT

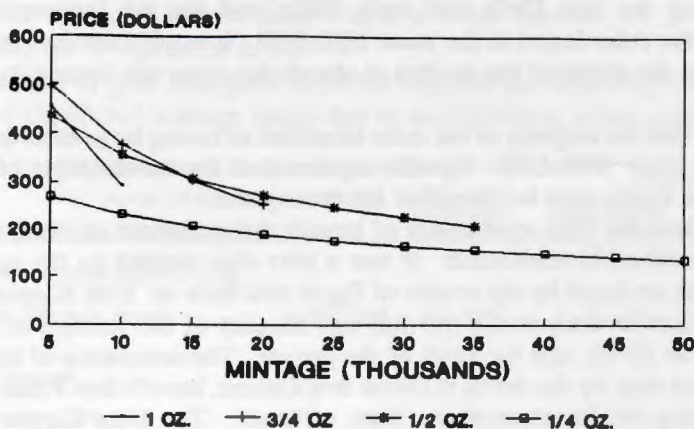


Table 3  
Illustration of the Effect of Weight and Mintage  
on Generic Israeli Gold Commemorative Coin Prices

Gold Weight (oz. Troy)	1.00	0.75	0.50	0.25
Mintage (Thousands)				
5	\$456	\$497	\$435	\$269
10	\$292	\$374	\$353	\$228
15		\$302	\$305	\$204
20		\$251	\$271	\$187
25			\$245	\$174
30			\$223	\$163
35			\$205	\$154
40				\$146
45				\$140
50				\$132

The graph and Table 3 illustrate the operation of equation 3 described above. They show the price behavior of an arbitrary gold coin from the Israeli commemorative series. By tracing any one of the lines on the graph, it is clear that as mintage increases, price falls at a declining rate. It appears that the market for standard Israeli bullion coins (1 oz. Troy) is extremely limited, at less than 10,000 pieces per issue. The market for Israeli gold issues appears most viable for coins having 1/4 to 1/2 ounce of gold content, especially the former. This may be part of the logic behind the current series of gold Independence Day 10 NIS issues, and the 5 NIS special issues.

To make the above conditions concrete, the first was specified to require a price at least double the predicted price. A relatively large original mintage figure was defined as at least 30,000. These conditions are satisfied by ten coins among Israel's silver commemorative coin issues. Those coins with their original mintages, remaining coins (estimated to the nearest 100), and estimated melt-down are shown in Table 2. The remaining coins shown are the center point of a range of plus or minus 11,200 coins.

The estimated net mintage figures have the additional attraction that they are consistent with the actual mintages recorded for Independence Day commemorative coins issued in the late 1960s and early 1970s, and for the Independence Day commemorative coins issued in the years 1975-1978. It would therefore appear that in those years, the ability of the market to absorb the coins was limited to 40-60,000 examples.

It is clear that the majority of the coins identified as having large melt-downs were issued in the years 1973-1975. Specific explanations for the doubling of mintages from previous levels must be identified for those years.

1973 marked the 25th anniversary of Israel's independence in 1948, and was a cause for considerable celebration. It was a year also marked by the coordinated surprise attack on Israel by the armies of Egypt and Syria on Yom Kippur, October 6th, a war which severely tested the skill and tenacity of the soldiers of the Israel Defense Forces (IDF), and the spirit of the people. The conclusion of the war was followed within days by the death of David Ben Gurion, Israel's first Prime Minister, and first among the founders of the State of Israel. The Yom Kippur War was accompanied by a steep increase in oil prices by the oil exporting countries, which led in turn to similar steep increases in the prices of other fuels. These energy price increases then necessitated an increase in exports by net-energy importing countries, Israel among them, in order to pay for the fuels they imported.

Commemorative coin issues were perhaps conceived as a means 1) to earn scarce currency, and 2) to keep Israel's presence and achievements in the forethoughts of its friends overseas. If such were the motives for the large mintage increases in those areas, the idea was apparently unsuccessful, in that sales of the coins do not appear to be materially different from mintages of coins in the immediately preceding and following years.

Israel's gold commemorative coin series are influenced by factors similar to those affecting the silver commemorative coin series. A similar analytical process resulted in the following regression equation describing market prices as follows:

$$\begin{aligned} \text{Predicted Price} &= [7.82 - 0.56 \times \text{LN (Mintage)} - 1.97 \times \text{Gold Wt. (oz. Troy)}] \\ \text{standard error:} &\quad (0.48) \quad (0.12) \quad (0.51) \end{aligned}$$

X Gold Wt. (oz. Troy) X metal price

Equation 3

$R^2 = 0.665$  Number of observations = 32 Degrees of Freedom = 29

The function was first estimated with an age term, but that proved not to be significant. Coin age was removed and the function re-estimated. The minus sign on the mintage coefficient (-0.56) indicates that as the mintage of a coin increases, its collector or investor value tends to decline. However, the small value of the coefficient compared with that for the silver coins, suggests that the gold issues are treated by the market more as bullion issues, with comparatively less value as art or



The gold coin price function describes a much more modest response of the market to mintage and metal weight than was the case for the silver coin series. This suggests that particularly the larger gold coins are perceived to a large extent as bullion coins, rather than as miniature art works or remembrances of particular events, persons or concepts.

The previous discussion of silver coin melt-downs suggests that the behavior of the gold coins should also be tested for mintage losses. It should be noted that because of the modest response of gold coin prices to mintage, estimates of gold coin losses will be much less certain than are those for the silver coins. Nevertheless, by assuming that the coins melted behave in an average manner, the gold coin price equation may be re-expressed as follows:

Examination of gold coin price behavior suggests the following two coins have experienced significant mintage losses due to melt-downs or other causes:

$$\text{Final Mintage} = \exp [7.82 - 1.97 \times \text{Gold wt. (oz. Troy)} - \text{Actual price ratio}] / (0.56) \quad \text{Equation 4}$$

Year	Subject		Original Mintage	Estimated Melt-down	Net Mintage
<b>Independence Commemoratives</b>					
1975/5735	Israel Bonds	IL500 Prf	31,693	6,393	25,300
<b>Special Issues</b>					
1974/5734	Ben Gurion	IL500 Prf	47,528	36,528	11,000

In addition to the specific causes cited previously for large mintages of the silver coins that apparently experienced large melt-downs, a factor that may have affected the original mintage of the 1975 gold coin was the legalization of gold holding and importation in the United States in 1975.

The collecting of Israeli commemorative coins experienced a boom in the late 1960s and early 1970s in the wake of the Six Day War. It may be that the apparently severe over-minting of particularly silver commemorative coins in 1973/75, and the debasement and over-pricing of new issues in the late 1970s severely disenchanted the collector market. The Independence Day commemoratives issued from 1975 to 1978 achieved BU mintages in the 40,000 range comparable to the mintage levels achieved in the late 1960s and early 1970s. However, the BU mintage of the 1979 issue declined by nearly half, and by 1982 the BU mintage was barely a third of that of the 1978 issue. Mintages of Independence Day silver commemoratives achieved in the latter 1980s have been in the 8-9,000 range, barely higher than the proof mintages for Independence Day commemoratives produced in the early 1960s.

The lesson is reminiscent of that learned by the Japanese about quality and value of their products. In the 1930s to 1950s, Japanese products had a reputation as cheap trinkets. It has taken many years of effort by Japanese companies producing superior products that address customer requirements in a focused manner to replace that reputation with a reputation for quality and good value. A similar process appears to be at work with respect to Israel's commemorative coin series. The coins will not be produced if production does not benefit the producer. They will not be purchased by customers if customers do not see them as having value, whether that value consist of artistry, remembrance of outstandingly significant events or persons, and/or prospect for financial gain through price increases over time of the issue as the number of collectors rises.

# THE JEWISH VIZIR OF EL CID

by Peter S. Horvitz

Spain's greatest hero of history and legend was Rodrigo Diaz (c.1040-1099), of the town of Vivar in Castile. To his contemporaries and to us he is known more familiarly as El Campeador, "leader of the battlefield," or El Cid, from the Arabic word for "lord." He was an historical person, a military leader who, for pay, served a number of different Christian and Muslim kings. Near the end of his life, though nominally under the sovereignty of Alfonso VI of León-Castile, he established his own personal principedom based on his conquest of the Muslim city of Valencia and its environs. El Cid also served as the hero of Spain's greatest literary achievement of the Middle Ages, *The Poem of the Cid* (*Poema de Mio Cid*), as well as numerous other epics, romances, ballads, and chronicles. In his literary incarnations the flesh and blood Rodrigo Diaz is transformed into a symbolic embodiment of Christian Spain's struggle against the Muslims. This metamorphosis closely parallels those of King Arthur, Robin Hood, Charlemagne, and Roland.

Early in *The Poem of the Cid* appears an anti-Semitic incident. This section of the poem portrays the greatest of Spanish heroes, the essence of Spanish chivalry, intentionally cheating two Jews. The moral to the readers of the epic is clear, that such double dealing in regard to Jews is acceptable, if not commendable.

This is the legend that appears in the epic: The Cid was unjustly exiled by Alfonso VI. He needed money to pay his followers, who all wished to accompany him into his exile. He had

two large wooden boxes made and filled them with sand. He had them brought to two Jewish moneylenders of Burgos, Raquel and Vidas. He told the Jews that the boxes were filled with gold. He pledged the boxes against 600 marks of coined money, but with the condition that they must not open the boxes before the end of the year. Much later in the poem, the Jews, who have discovered the fraud of the great hero, complain to El Cid's ambassador. The ambassador promises them that their principal, at least, will be returned.

*The Poem of the Cid* was composed between c.1175 and 1207. The views expressed in the poem are the views of the time of its composition, not the views of the lifetime of the historical Cid. The intervening period of almost one hundred years saw, in Spain, an upsurge in animosity of Christians against Jews, probably spurred by the spirit of the Crusades.

Another relevant legend concerning El Cid appears in a work entitled *Estoria de Cardeña*, written sometime before 1272, about a hundred years after *The Poem of the Cid*.

The story is that after his death, the mummified corpse of the Cid was placed on an ivory chair in the Abbey Church of the town of Cardeña. Seven years later a Jewish intruder in the church attempted to pluck the hero's beard. The right hand of the hero seized the hilt of his sword and started to draw it from its scabbard. The Jew was terrified and subsequently converted to Christianity.

This story provides a new level of intolerance. Now the Jew is not



merely to be cheated, but terrified into conversion.

It is interesting that historians in comparing the historical Rodrigo Diaz to his legendary counterpart have often demeaned the historical reality in relation to the idealized knight of legend. The Cid of legend was chivalric and struggled to free the peninsula from Muslim domination. The historical figure was greedy, cruel and as willing to serve Muslim masters as Christian. If Rodrigo Diaz was faithful to any ideal, it was that of his own benefit.

But the historic Cid must not be demeaned. For the real Rodrigo Diaz was just as amazing as his legendary equivalent in the area of his real accomplishments – battle. The Cid of legend as warrior was not made of whole cloth. The astounding prowess of the Cid in war is absolutely historical.

In one aspect, at least, the historical Rodrigo Diaz was the moral superior of the figure of legend. The real Cid was *not* an anti-Semite.

The atmosphere of the Christian kingdoms of Spain in the 11th century had, apparently, not yet become the virulently anti-Semitic one of later times. For instance, Alfonso VI had appointed a Jew to the position of ambassador. When this man was murdered, the king sent out an expedition to punish the miscreants. But Rodrigo Diaz's appointment of a Jew to the position of vizir, his principal assistant and administrator, went beyond the tolerance of even most of his contemporaries.

There can be little doubt that the depiction of the legendary El Cid as an anti-Semite contributed to the spirit of Spanish anti-Semitism that culminated in the expulsion of the Jews in 1492, and in the horrors of

the Inquisition.

The sad thing is that this depiction of El Cid is false. There is no evidence the real, historical Rodrigo Diaz was an anti-Semite. Indeed, the opposite was the case. For when El Cid reached the greatest peak of his power, his rule of Valencia, he placed the administration of his fiefdom exclusively in the hands of Jews, whom he obviously felt he could depend upon and trust.

In 1094, El Cid conquered the Moorish city of Valencia. He took over the rule of the city, which he continued to hold until his death, in 1099. By the autumn of 1094 he had appointed a Jewish vizir to serve as his principal deputy. We, unfortunately, do not know the name of the Cid's vizir.

The facts concerning the Cid's Jewish vizir are preserved for us in a history of Valencia written by the Arab historian Ibn 'Alqama (1036 or 1037-1116), a native of the city. Ibn 'Alqama's work was written during the life of Rodrigo Diaz and is considered trustworthy, if hostile towards El Cid and his administration. The following is the passage in question: "The Jew (the Cid's vizir) subjected the Muslim population to the greatest vexations: others of his co-religionists exerted themselves against the Valencians, who suffered the most bitter humiliations. It was from among the Jews that there were chosen the fiscal officials charged with the collection of taxes, the civil servants, the drafters of documents, the clerks for the armed forces. The Jewish vizir took upon himself the role of prefect of the city, ordering arrests and administering punishments. Each Muslim had at his heels a police agent who accompanied him every morning to ensure that he contributed something to the treasure-

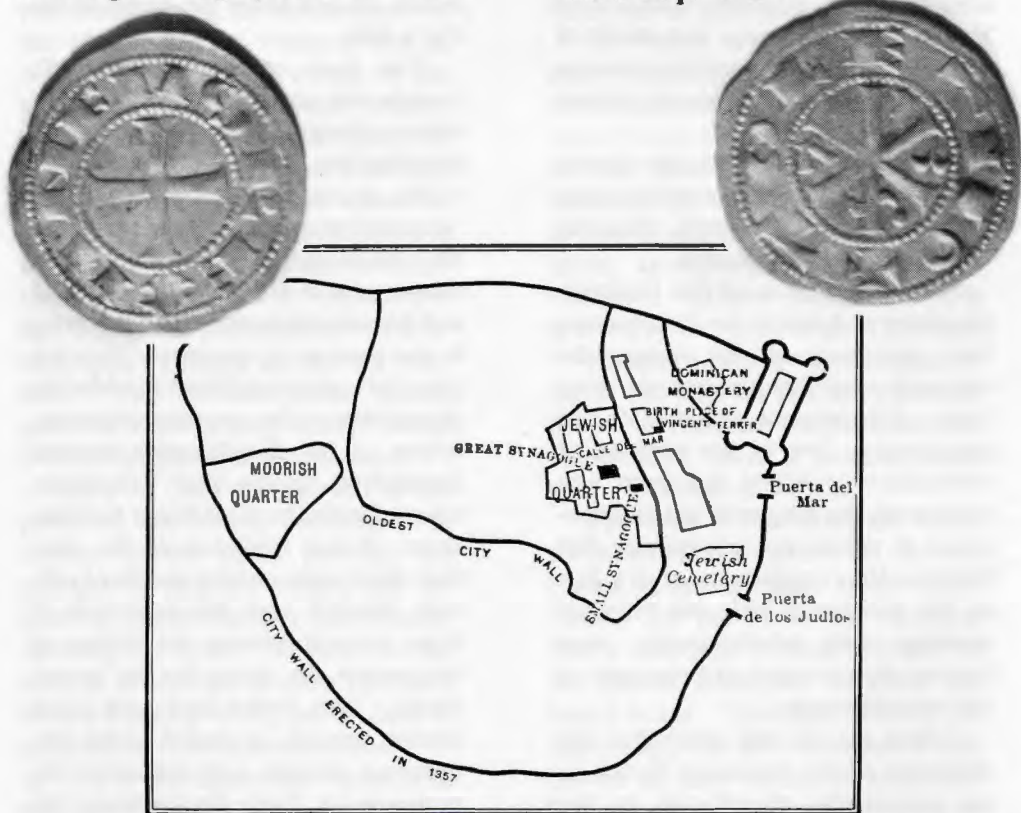
chests of the master of Valencia. If he failed to do this he was killed or tortured." (*The Quest for El Cid* by Richard Fletcher [New York, 1990,] p. 181.)

The story about following every Muslim is certainly exaggerated, but the wealthier citizens undoubtedly were spied upon.

When El Cid conquered Valencia, the circulating currency of the city would have been the Arabic coins struck in Spain during the period. El Cid did not issue his own coinage. Undoubtedly, however, the coins of Rodrigo Diaz's sovereign, Alfonso VI of León-Castile, would, at that time, have begun to legally circulate. The

Jewish fiscal officials that the Cid appointed would have supervised the circulation of various coins.

The coin that illustrates this article is a silver dinero of Alfonso VI, measuring 19 millimeters, struck in Toledo. As Alfonso VI first became master of Toledo in 1085, this coin was issued sometime from that date on. Alfonso VI died in 1109. The obverse of this coin shows an equilateral cross surrounded by the inscription ANFUS REX. The reverse shows a Christogram with an alpha and an omega in the arms. The inscription starts with a cross mintmark and reads TOLETVO. The coin is illustrated in Heiss's book on Spanish coinage as item 3 on plate 1.



Plan of Valencia in the Fourteenth Century, Showing Position of Jewish Quarter.



# CLUB



# BULLETIN

**DONNA J. SIMS N.I.G. Editor**

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Volume 13 No. 1 January-February 1992

**INS OF BROWARD** - The discussion topic for the October meeting was Modern Israel Trade Coins, beginning with the mil, pruta agora, lira and sheqel series. Exhibit topics were items concerning currency & coins of Israel. Officers of this group are: Jerry Cohen, president; Sylvia Magnus, secretary, Roy Miller, treasurer & Irving Rudin, rec sec.

**INS OF CLEVELAND** - Israel's very first gold coin, the 1960 Herzl 20-pounder was the study subject of the October mtg. A history of this coin's uniqueness was covered in INSC's newsletter, The Agora."

**INS OF LONG ISLAND** - Exhibit topics for the Sept. meeting were: Jewish New Year, charity tokens & medals, souvenir cards and summer acquisitions. For October the topics were: Sukkot, Sinchat Torah, Columbus, odds & curious and recent acquisitions. Moe Weinschel reported on recent conventions.

**INS OF LOS ANGELES** - "Coins of Bible Days 400 B.C. - 400 A.D.," an ANA slide program, was shown for the October meeting and narrated by Paul Borack. (I didn't realize how much a person forgets about certain facts regarding medals, coins, etc. until one decides to talk about a numismatic exhibit. Well that's what happened to me when I came across my Petroleum presentation medal & decided to use it for show & tell. Not only did I have to re-read its background but learned very quickly that most of us have forgotten the real difference between the three types of medals issued in the State of Israel. You ask what are the three kinds? Well, they are: state, commission and presentation. My little exhibit project turned into a short re-education presentation at two different INS clubs. So all of you out there in INS-land, read up on one of your items and talk about it.)

**INS OF SAN GABRIEL VALLEY** - Dr. Thomas Fitzgerald spoke on "Roots of Israel Coinage" at the October meeting. A special luncheon was held prior to the meeting.

**ISRAEL COIN CLUB OF LOS ANGELES** - An AINA slide program entitled "Similarities of Israel Paper Money" was the program feature at the September meeting. At the November meeting a slide program entitled "The Jewish Connection, Numismatically Speaking", by David Paszament, was featured for the program and narrated by Ben Abelson. ICCLA has just received its 25 year membership plaque from the ANA. Congratulations. This group is the very first INS club to be organized in the U.S. Meetings are now held on odd numbered months and are conducted by alternating members.

**INS OF MASSACHUSETTS** - Irving Rudin spoke on "Zichron Yaakov Tokens - How a Mystery was Solved" at the September meeting. (This Kibbutz was founded by Baron Rothschild in 1882; local tokens were issued in the value of 1, 1/2 & 1/4). The annual dinner will be held in November.

**INS OF MICHIGAN** - INSM was most fortunate to have as honored guest speaker at its October meeting, Yaakov Meshorer, Chief Curator of Archeology at the Israel Museum in Jerusalem. The special meeting was held at the Potomac Club.

**INS OF NEW YORK** - Discussion topics at the September meeting were: my most beautiful Israel coin; concentration camp currency, pidyon haben, & any items relating to Rosh Hashanah, Yom Kippur or Succoth. Topics for the October meeting were: varieties of prutot series, Judea Capta, small change paper tokens, Ashkelon and Acco coin medals.

**WESTCHESTER ISRAEL NUMISMATIC SOCIETY** - Modern Israeli numismatics and the creation of the State of Israel is now being studied & discussed at the meetings. A banquet will be held in December.

**COMMENTS FROM DJS** - It is always good news to hear of an INS club trying to reactivate itself & we wish the INS of San Fernando Valley (Calif.) good luck. Hope one & all had the best of holidays with your families and a safe one. May 1992 be the year of world peace. Happy new year to everyone. Be sure to help your club with your attendance and participation. Maybe you could even come up with some program ideas. Our clubs can only survive by everyone helping. May 1992 be good to all of us. Be well, be happy. . . *DJS*





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